

A-3 NEW YORK TIMES
14 July 1985

Angola, Angry Over Rebel Aid Issue, Ends U.S. Talks

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 13 — Angola, reacting angrily to recent Congressional votes, announced today that it was suspending talks with the United States for a settlement between Angola and South Africa.

The announcement, made by the Angolan Foreign Ministry, seemed to represent a further setback to the American mediation efforts, which had been faltering in recent months.

Angola said it was breaking off talks because of votes to end a nine-year old ban on American aid to rebels in Angola. The ban is known for its sponsor, former Senator Dick Clark of Iowa.

"The repeal of the Clark amendment will leave the U.S. Administration and international imperialism free to openly and directly intervene in Angola and exercise military and political pressures on the Angolan state," the Angolan statement said.

The State Department said the United States had no plans to aid the rebels or to relax its diplomatic efforts.

U.S. Says Door Remains Open

A State Department spokesman said, "It is our view that the Angolan statement does not close the door to a negotiated settlement."

The United States has no diplomatic relations with Angola, but officials have visited each other's capitals in the course of the mediation effort.

The United States has been trying to work out an arrangement by which South Africa would allow United Nations-supervised independence of South-West Africa, also known as Namibia, while the 25,000 Cuban combat troops in Angola would be withdrawn. Earlier this year a deal was believed near, but recent military moves by South Africa and the Angolan statement today have raised obstacles.

Despite the Angolan announcement, the American negotiator, Chester A. Crocker, who is Assistant Secretary of State for African affairs, said that the efforts would continue. He said that if the Angolans believed that the United States was reversing course, "they will be losing an opportunity and evading key decisions."

"We intend to maintain our diplomatic efforts," he said through an aide.

Clark Amendment Repeal at Issue

The Angolan action followed passage by the House of Representatives of a foreign aid bill on Thursday that included repeal of the 1976 Clark amendment. The amendment blocked American assistance to the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, known by its initials in Portuguese as Unita.

In 1975 and 1976, after Portugal had

granted Angola independence, the United States and South Africa aided the Unita movement against the rival Marxist forces that were aided by the Soviet Union and Cuba. The Marxists eventually prevailed and established a Government in Luanda.

The American aid, provided covertly through the Central Intelligence Agency, provoked criticism in Congress, and the Clark amendment was passed. Unita continued to receive support from South Africa, however, and still controls southeast Angola.

The Senate earlier this year repealed the Clark amendment as part of a State Department funding bill. The House and Senate versions must be reconciled and signed by the President before the repeal becomes law, a process that may take months.

The Reagan Administration has supported the repeal of the Clark amendment, as has every Administration since 1976, on the ground that it was an infringement on executive authority.

Mr. Crocker said, however, that even if the repeal became law, "there are no plans" to aid Unita "and no such decisions have been taken."

The Angolan statement today said: "The repeal of the Clark amendment at this particular moment, when the forces of the racist Pretoria regime and its Unita puppets are desperately attempting to destabilize the economy of the People's Republic of Angola, is further evidence of the complicity which has always existed between the U.S. Administration and the reactionary and racist Pretoria regime."

"In view of this, the Government of the People's Republic of Angola has no other alternative but to suspend the contacts that it has been maintaining with emissaries of the American Government for the analysis of the problems of the region."

As part of the American mediation effort, Angola and South Africa presented peace plans last year. Angola proposed removing part of the Cuban force and transferring those that remained to northern Angola, leaving vague when all the Cubans would be withdrawn.

South Africa called for the total withdrawal of all Cubans almost simultaneously with South African withdrawal from Namibia.

Last March, the United States offered a compromise, but before it could be acted on, South African military agents were apprehended by Angola where they apparently were planning to blow up an oil installation. After South Africa raided the capital of Botswana last month, the United States withdrew its ambassador from South Africa.

Complicating the situation is the looming threat of American sanctions against South Africa. The House and the Senate have passed differing versions of bills that would impose economic sanctions against South Africa until it changed its racial separation policy of apartheid. The Administration, arguing that this would only harden views in South Africa, opposes sanctions.

In the House debate last week, some liberals who opposed repeal of the Clark amendment said it made no sense for the Congress, on one hand, to impose sanctions on South Africa and, on the other hand, seem to encourage aid to the South African-supported insurgency in Angola.